including Rath Yatra period. The hotels are under periodical inspection of the Orissa Pollution Control Board. Cases have been filed against 23 defaulting hotels under CrPC 133 by the Puri Municipality in the court of Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Puri.

(c) The centre has sanctioned a sewerage and sewage treatment project for Puri at an estimated amount of Rs. 48.29 crore on 70:30 cost sharing basis between the Centre and the State Government of Orissa. It covers laying of sewers and setting up of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). The project is under implementation by Orissa Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

Decentralization of Green Clearance

1235. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has decided about decentralization in the sphere of green clearance recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Government has brought out a draft revised environment impact assessment notification published in Gazette of India *vide* S.O. 1324(E) dated 15th September, 2005. In the said draft notification, State level clearances in respect of select projects below a prescribed threshold limit are proposed.

(c) Does not arise.

Diminishing tiger population

1236. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that tiger population is dwindling due to poaching in the Panama Reserves in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the population of big cats in Ranthambore National Park, Rajasthan is also diminishing;

(c) whether Government are taking any steps to combat the poaching in Panama Reserves and also diminishing factor of big cats population in Ranthambore National Park; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) This Ministry has not received any report from Madhya Pradesh regarding dwindling of tiger population in Panna Tiger Reserve. "Panama Reserves" do not exist in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) The State Government has estimated a population of 26 tigers in Ranthambore as against its earlier estimation of 35 tigers in the reserve during 2001-02. The State Police in investigating the case of alleged poaching of tigers from the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve.

(c) and (d) The Steps taken by Government of India for tiger conservation are given in the statement.

Statement

Details of steps taken by Govt. for tiger conservation

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the State under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.

(iii) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(iv) The Ministry of Home Affairs has addressed all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formation to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) A National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) has been launched with several action points and priority projects for conservation and protection of wildlife in the country.